

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:  
a heating member which includes a first region and a second region:  
the second region ~~locates~~ located in a predetermined position in the axial direction  
with respect to the first region;  
a heating unit which is provided inside the heating member and which includes at  
least one of a first heating member for heating the first region and a second heating member  
for heating the second region;  
a main control unit which carries out at least a first control mode and a second control  
mode;  
wherein the first control mode ~~(temperature drop control mode)~~ which performs  
control to drop the temperatures in the first and second regions from a fixing temperature by a  
predetermined temperature, with specific timing corresponding to a number of mediums on  
which an image is to be formed, at least once, while an image formation is being executed at  
the fixing temperature; and  
wherein the second control mode ~~(lamp OFF control mode)~~ which turns off either the  
first heating member or ~~and~~ the second heating member which has priority over the other  
member, the priority being determined according to the number of mediums on which an  
image is to be formed, with predetermined timing corresponding to the temperature supplied  
in the first control mode, when the image formation is completed.
2. (Currently amended) The image forming apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein the first region is disposed at the center of the heating member, and the second region  
is disposed at both ends of the first region, and when control to drop the temperatures has  
been performed once by the first control mode, the second heating member has priority over

~~the first heating member in being turned off first the timing with which the first heating member is turned off is shifted from the timing with which the second heating member is turned off in the second control mode.~~

3. (Currently amended) The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a third control mode (~~temperature recovery control mode~~) which is carried out by the main control unit and which returns the temperatures in the first and second regions to the fixing temperature stepwise when the temperatures in the first and second regions have been lowered from the fixing temperature in the first control mode after the main control unit image formation is completed, wherein the temperature of the first heating member or the second heating member to which priority has been given by the first control mode is returned first ~~the timing with which the temperature in the first region is recovered is shifted from the timing with which the temperature in the second region is recovered.~~

4. (Currently amended) The image forming apparatus according to claim 23, further comprising:

a third control mode which is carried out by the main control unit and which returns the temperatures in the first and second regions to the fixing temperature stepwise when the temperatures in the first and second regions have been lowered from the fixing temperature in the first control mode after the main control unit image formation is completed, wherein the temperature of the second heating member to which priority has been given by the first control mode is returned first ~~wherein the third control mode recovers the temperatures in the first and second regions with predetermined timing corresponding to the temperature dropped in the first control mode.~~

5. (Currently amended) A method of controlling a heating unit, comprising:

(1) when an image formation is executed at a first temperature, performing control to drop the temperature of a heating ~~member roller~~ to a second temperature lower than the first temperature, with predetermined timing corresponding to a number of mediums on which an image is to be formed, at least once;

(2) when the image formation is completed, turning off the heating member with predetermined timing corresponding to the second temperature lowered from the first temperature stepwise; and

(3) after the image formation is completed, returning from the second temperature to the first temperature stepwise.

6. (Currently amended) The method of controlling a heating unit according to claim 5, wherein

(2) when the heating member composed of a first heating member and a second heating member is turned off, either the first heating member or the second heating member which has priority over the other heating member is turned off first, the priority being determined according to the number of mediums on which an image is to be formed ~~shifting the timing with which the first heating member is turned off from the timing with which the second heating member is turned off.~~

7. (Currently amended) The method of controlling a heating unit according to claim 6, wherein

(2) the timing with which the first and second heating members are turned off is determined by (1) the second temperature obtained in dropping from the first temperature.

8. (Currently amended) The method of controlling a heating unit according to claim 5, wherein

(3) when the temperature of the heating member composed of ~~the~~ a first heating member and ~~the~~ a second heating member is recovered stepwise, shifting the timing with which the temperature in a first region heated by the first heating member rises from the timing with which the temperature in a second region heated by the second heating member rises.

9. (Currently amended) The method of controlling a heating unit according to claim 8, wherein

(3) the timing with which the first and second regions are raised is determined by (4) the second temperature obtained in dropping from the first temperature.

10. (Currently amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

a heating member includes a first heating member which heats a first region and a second heating member which heats a second region ;

heating means for heating the a heating member;

dropping means for dropping the heating member kept at a first temperature to a second temperature lower than the first temperature with predetermined timing corresponding to a number of mediums on which an image is to be formed;

OFF means for turning off, first, either the first heating member or the second heating member which has priority over the other heating member, the priority being determined according to the number of mediums on which an image is to be formed ~~the heating member~~ with predetermined timing according to the second temperature; and

recovering means for returning the heating member kept at the second temperature to the first temperature with predetermined timing corresponding to the number of mediums on which an image is to be formed, wherein the temperature of either the first heating member or the second heating member which has the priority is returned first.

11. (Currently amended) The image forming apparatus according to claim 10,  
~~further comprising:~~

~~the heating means includes a first heating member which heats a first region (center)~~  
~~and a second heating member which heats a second region (end); and~~

wherein the OFF means shifts the timing with which the first heating member is  
turned off from the timing with which the second heating member is turned off, when the  
heating member composed of the first heating member and the second heating member is  
turned off.

12. (Original) The image formation apparatus according to claim 11, wherein  
the timing with which the first and second heating member are turned off is  
determined by the second temperature obtained when the dropping means drops the  
temperature from the first temperature.

13. (Currently amended) The image formation apparatus according to claim 10,  
~~further comprising:~~

~~the heating means includes a first heating member which heats a first region (center)~~  
~~and a second heating member which heats a second region (end); and~~

wherein the recovering means shifts the timing with which the temperature in the first  
region is raised from the timing with which the temperature in the second region is raised.

14. (Original) The image formation apparatus according to claim 13, wherein  
the timing with which the temperatures in the first and second regions are raised is  
determined by the second temperature obtained when the dropping means drops the  
temperature from the first temperature.

15. (New) The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the first region is disposed at the center of the heating member, and the second region is disposed at both ends of the first region,

wherein when control to drop the temperatures by the first control mode is not performed, the first heating member has priority over the second heating member in being turned off.

16. (New) The method of controlling a heating unit according to claim 6, wherein when the first heating member heats the center of the heating member, and the second heating member heats both ends of the heating member, and the step of turning off the temperatures is performed at once,

the second heating member has priority over the first heating member in being turned off.

17. (New) The method of controlling a heating unit according to claim 6, wherein the temperature of either the first heating member or the second heating member which has priority over the other heating member is returned first.